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U.S. Rep. Mark Kirk will soon travel to Afghanistan and Pakistan with other members of Congress to evaluate foreign assistance programs in the region, and is offering to take letters and cards with him for any of the 11,000 U.S. troops serving in Afghanistan.

Following October's devastating Pakistani earthquake that killed 70,000 people, Kirk and other congressional leaders will assess the damage to determine what further steps the United States can take to enhance the humanitarian and rebuilding efforts already under way.

As part of the trip, Kirk will travel to Kabul, Afghanistan where he will meet with Afghan leaders and U.S. troops currently serving in the country.

During last year's holiday season, Kirk launched "Holiday Cards for Troops" and delivered more than 1,600 letters to U.S. troops serving in Iraq.

Kirk is once again offering to take letters and cards, this time to the troops in Afghanistan.

"Our Holiday Cards for Troops outreach enjoyed a tremendous outpouring of support last year," Kirk said. "I was honored to deliver all those cards and letters to our men and women in Iraq.

"This year, we have an opportunity to make sure the families and friends of our military men and women serving in Afghanistan have an opportunity to send a letter from home this holiday season," the congressman added. "I will personally deliver the cards and letters to the U.S. Army's central mail processing center in Kabul - guaranteeing their arrival before the holidays. Nothing boosts the morale and spirits of Americans in uniform more than letters from home."

Kirk's office will accept letters and cards through Wednesday.

Letters and cards must be properly stamped with first-class postage and addressed in order for them to be delivered. Kirk can only take regular letters and cards to Afghanistan, not packages.

Kirk's office is located at 102 Wilmot Road, Suite 200, Deerfield, IL 60015.